Poetry Series

Lionel Hartley
- Poems -

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Lionel Hartley (www.poemhunter.com/lionel-hartley)

Born in New Zealand of English parentage, Lionel D C Hartley worked as an office and theatre manager and commercial artist while gaining qualifications in Business Administration and an honorary diploma in Dramatic Art. In the 1970s, he graduated as a Registered Nurse with subsequent postgraduate qualifications in Psychiatric and Psychopaedic Nursing, Nursing Nutrition and Administration, Sex Therapy and Family Life Counselling. In 1980, he graduated from a Melbourne Theological Seminary with a Diploma of Religion and in 1989 received a PhD in Sociology. He also has qualifications in graphic design, computer programming, business law, accountancy and economics. He is perhaps best known as the author, co-author, editor, and/or illustrator of over 100 books and hundreds of periodical articles, pamphlets and multimedia publications. He retired after 30 years as a family life counsellor. Lionel is still very involved in campanology, writing, manuscript translating (English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Hebrew, Latin, and Portuguese) , and public speaking. He is married to Rosemary (nee Wells) and they have three grown children. -- Adapted from a profile written by Theo B Hawkins.

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Daily Prayer

They looked a lovely couple
As they trod the aisle that day.
'A fairy-tale wedding,
A dream come true'
Mother was heard to say.

For three long years they'd dated
And done a lot of talking
That's how to get acquainted
When Christians are a-courting.

And now the weddings over
Why, there's no need to talk.
It's all been done beforehand,
Like 'Crawl before you walk.'

And so through years of marriage
They hardly ever spoke
(Except when he got desperate
or when the frypan broke!)

But now there's a major crisis
Time to seek out one to care
But since the talking had long since ceased,
She found he wasn't there!

Now listen, fellow Christian
(I talk to me, as well)
Is your wedding with the Saviour
A story I can tell?

Is daily prayer (that's 'talking')
A thing we used to do?
Or do we only remember
To pray for a season, or two?

We know he'll never leave us,
We are assured of that.
But if in silence we walk away,

His tears cry to our back!

So turn now, fellow Christian
And reaffirm with me
    To listen and talk
    To daily walk
Now and eternally.

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Making Our Lord's Prayer Ours

Making Our Lord's Prayer Ours

Our Father,
the most understanding of parents
Which art in heaven,
but neglects not Thy earth,
Hallowed be Thy name,
and let me not take it in vain.

Thy Kingdom come,
and let me be subject to Thee
Thy will be done.
Please show me what I can do
On earth as you prepare me for Heaven.

Give us this day
(let me not fret over the next)
Our daily bread
for our bodies, our souls and our minds,
And forgive us with the same willingness
that we forgive others!

Lead us not into temptation
(and chide us when we lead ourselves)
But deliver us from evil
through the leading of Your word
And through our daily commitment
to talk with you.

For Thine is the Kingdom
- Thy Kingdom in my life and through eternity
And the power and the glory
are to be ascribed to you alone
forever (beginning NOW) ! Amen.

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The Cave And The Sun - A Fable

Once there was a dingy Cave,
Hidden beneath the soil.
Her life was one of misery, hardship and of toil.
But one day through a little crack
A voice was heard to say,
'Come into the Sunshine, out into the light,
Out of utter darkness, out of bitter night,
Come into the open air and into glorious day! '

But Cave was quite a skeptic. She'd never seen the light.
'What is the Sunshine of which you speak? It sounds too good for me.
But nevertheless I'll venture out, for this I've got to see! '
And see, she did, with awe-filled eyes that blinked in wonderment
At all the brilliant colours bright, a new world to behold,
She had to tell the Sunlight about her past life - dark and cold.

Yet Mr Sun had never known what darkness was,
Or damp or dull, or cold
And so he too was a skeptic and would not find his peace
Until he ventured underground to find the dark beneath.

But unlike cave, who found the light when she ventured into day,
The sun shone bright through caverns deep, and to his sheer dismay
The damp walls sparkled in His light, the shadows ran away
And in the once-dark chasms there shone the light of day.

'Where is the gloomy darkness? All I can see is light!
For where the Sun shines brightly there is no cold or night.
The lesson's plain, we need to be a light for all around
For where there is the Light of the World
No darkness can be found.

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A Sponge Knoweth No Discrimination - A Fable

A Sponge Knoweth No Discrimination

The frog - he had a problem.
His pond was far too green.
Another's pond was bluer
(He heard the birds had seen) .

But Froggie had an answer:
he'd suck up all the green,
and so he bought a bath sponge -
the biggest ever seen!

Well, sponges have no manners.
They suck up good and bad.
And very soon an empty pond
Was all that poor frog had.

A sponge does no deciding - only you can choose.
Expose your mind to evil, and you will surely lose.
By choosing what you see and hear; what you eat and do,
then you control the input and you won't get sucked in too!

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The Art Of Marriage

The Art of Marriage

A good marriage must be CREATED.
In the art of marriage,
the LITTLE things are the BIG things...
It is never being too old to hold hands.
It is remembering to say 'I love you' often.
It is beauty of a loving committed bond:
emotional, social, spiritual, physical oneness.
It is never going to sleep angry.
It is having a mutual sense of values
and common objectives.
It is standing together facing the world.
It is forming a circle
that gathers in the whole family.
It is speaking words of appreciation and
demonstrating gratitude in thoughtful ways.
It is the capacity to forgive and to forget.
It is giving each other an atmosphere in which
each can grow.
It is the joy of knowing your God together.
It is not merely marrying the right person...
it is BEING the right partner.

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Friendship

Friendship

Friends are neither made nor bought
We find them when we're feeling glum
When we've waited lonely years
Then friendship's found, when friendship's sought
Through a comrade, a pal, a buddy or a chum
To still the deepest fears and tears.

We need neither explanation nor reason -
A glance, a look, a sigh.
A clasp of the hand can clasp the heart.
No matter what the season
When a friend comes by

There are bonds that time can never part.
For once you have a true friend
Whose touch reaches to your need
And with gracious patience, an ear that bends -
The words of Jesus will then blend
With those your friend will plead,
'Henceforth not servants; I have called you friends! '

God grants our friendship grow
With his grace to impart
A greater measure of his love -
So that we may truly know
The warmth that fills our heart
Is given from above.

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The Leaven Of The Spirit

The Leaven of the Spirit

Lord, You are the bread of life.
Make me, Lord, a slice of thee;
May life for me be Spirit filled -
The leaven swelling up in me.

The silent unseen working
Transforming lazy flour
Into holy air-filled bubbling life;
Risen, baked, and given power!

So life no longer is a loaf
Of wasted energy.
Lord, may the crumbs I leave behind,
Draw other souls to Thee.

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When Love Is Feeling Sick

Once upon a time
Love was feeling poorly,
So he went to the Doctor
On Monday, bright and early
To see what alchemy would cure the pain
And light up the love in his life again.

In order to have a healthy love
A love that's warm and close
The doctor prescribed the giving of love
And if that doesn't work?
Double the dose.

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The Measure Of Friendship

Friendship is not measured
By day or by year
Nor by miles or kilometers
By far or by near...
Nor by rule or by dictate
Command or by law
Nor freedom from argument
Disagreement or war.
Friendship is not even measured
By how much we share
But by love and concern
And showing we care.

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A Christmas Prayer

Lord, this is our prayer, we know you are near
We know that You care; that you sense our tears,
You feel our pain and as we come to you again
You feel our joy as we praise your holy name.

Our hands and feet are committed for your use here on earth
For the building of your kingdom in honour of Your Birth.
The day you changed all history to show us the father's love
By leaving all the glory, leaving Heaven above.

A stable rude was where you came to begin your sacred duty
Animals for company, a manger for a bed, no comforts, no beauty
In the comfort of our decorated homes, we need reminding once again
That Christmas is not about tinsel, but remembering why you came.

And as the angel chorus welcomed you that day
We too welcome you into our lives to stay.
And as humble shepherds were privileged that night
We too consider it an honour to be for you a light.

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As the Eastern wise men came in homage to their king
We likewise pay you tribute as we join in offering __
Ourselves into your service, whatever way we can
Acknowledging that every gift comes from your generous hand.

We confess our sins and selfish ways,
You take confessed sin and blow it away.
You give us new life and new paths to tread,
Free from anxiety, worry and dread.

Filled with Your peace, you give us new hope,
New vision, new hearts and all we need to cope.
We offer our thanks, our gratitude clear
Lord, this is our prayer, we know you are near

We come to You for learning, our hearts are open wide,
Inviting Your Holy Spirit to come and dwell inside.
Teaching us all things that we need to know
As we heed your commission for us to boldly ‘Go'.

For all that you've done and are doing today
And what you have planned for eternity
We praise you, precious Lord again.
This is our prayer, in Jesus' name.
Amen

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